



Billing Code: 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

RIN 0648-XC210

Marine Mammals; File No. 17410

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; receipt of application.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G; Responsible Party: Robert Small), 1255 West 8th Street, Juneau, AK, 99811, has applied in due form for a permit to import, export, collect, and receive marine mammal parts for scientific research.

DATES: Written, telefaxed, or e-mail comments must be received on or before [insert date 30 days after date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review by selecting “Records Open for Public Comment” from the Features box on the Applications and Permits for Protected Species (APPS) home page, <https://apps.nmfs.noaa.gov>, and then selecting File No. 17410 from the list of available applications.

These documents are also available upon written request or by appointment in the following offices:

Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301)427-8401; fax (301)713-0376; and

Alaska Region, NMFS, P.O. Box 21668, Juneau, AK 99802-1668; phone (907)586-7221; fax (907)586-7249.

Written comments on this application should be submitted to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, at the address listed above. Comments may also be submitted by facsimile to (301)713-0376, or by email to NMFS.Pr1Comments@noaa.gov. Please include the File No. in the subject line of the email comment.

Those individuals requesting a public hearing should submit a written request to the Chief, Permits and Conservation Division at the address listed above. The request should set forth the specific reasons why a hearing on these applications would be appropriate.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laura Morse or Amy Sloan, (301)427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The subject permit is requested under the authority of the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972, as amended (MMPA; 16 U.S.C. 1361 et seq.), the regulations governing the taking and importing of marine mammals (50 CFR part 216), the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (ESA; 16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq.), the regulations governing the taking, importing, and exporting of endangered and threatened species (50 CFR 222-226), and the Fur Seal Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1151 et seq.).

The objectives of the proposed research are to obtain information on population status and distribution, stock structure, age distribution, mortality rates, productivity, feeding habits, and health status of twenty-six species of pinnipeds (excluding walrus) and cetaceans found in Alaskan waters; such data would be used for conservation and management purposes. The applicant is requesting authorization to collect, receive, import, and export marine mammal parts from legal foreign (Russia and Canada) and domestic subsistence-hunts; scientists in academic, federal, and state institutions involved in legally authorized marine mammal research; dead

beach-cast species; and incidental commercial fisheries bycatch. Import/export activities would occur world-wide. No live animal takes are being requested under this permit. The requested duration of the permit is five years.

In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), an initial determination has been made that the activities proposed are categorically excluded from the requirement to prepare an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.

Concurrent with the publication of this notice in the Federal Register, NMFS is forwarding a copy of the application to the Marine Mammal Commission and its Committee of Scientific Advisors.

Dated: September 4, 2012.

P. Michael Payne, Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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